Leveling Up the Classroom: Day Two

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Esports LOUNGE

8:30-9:30AM	*Breakfast*	
	Section Two | Games and Multimodality	
9:30-10:10	Session 6	[Zoom] Deirdre Flood, LaGuardia Comm. College "A Stance the Player Takes: Using The Gardens Between to Teach Symbolism to First Year College Writing Students"
10:15-10:55	Session 7	[Zoom] Anthony Vernon, Oklahoma State Univ. "Multi-Modal Availability for those with Dis/abilities at Writing Centers"
10:55-11:15	*Intermission*	
11:15-12:45PM	Roundtable Three | Incorporating Video Games into a Core Course	
	Speakers	Dr. Kathryn Kohls, Jannell McConnell Parsons, Gavin Pulley, Mark Hines, Jaylene Patterson | Univ. of Kentucky
12:45-2:15	*Lunch*	
	Section Three | Changing the Rules	
2:15-2:55	Session 8	Michael Merriam, Univ. Central Florida, "Metattendance: Revolutionizing Attendance Policies Through The Use of Asymmetrical Policies and Player Roles in the Digital Classroom"
3-3:40	Session 9	Ricky Mouser, Indiana Univ. Bloomington "Letting Students Write the Rules"
3:40-4	*Intermission*	
4-5:30	Keynote 2:	Scot Osterweil, Learning Games Network, "..."

PeerCentered

PeerCentered is a space for peer writing tutors/consultants or anyone interested in collaborative learning in writing centers to blog with their colleagues from around the world. Bloggers here will share their ideas, experiences, or insight. To contribute to the blog, please contact Clint.Gardner@slcc.edu.

Multimodal Availability for those with Dis/abilities at Writing Centers

By Anthony David Vernon October 30, 2023

Writing centers should increase the availability of multimodal tutoring tools if they wish to grant equitable access to writing improvements for students with dis/abilites. Allison Hitt properly identifies that, “spaces [should not be simply] minimally accessible, but instead [be able] to consider how the disabled may be able to most fully participate.” Some advocate for multi-literacy as the biggest key to granting students with dis/abilities access to writing centers. However, it is multimodality that grants students with dis/abilities equitable access to tutoring services. Multimodal tools are more useful for a wider range of students with dis/abilities than multi-literacy tools. Furthermore, multimodal pedagogies can more easily push for assistive technologies than multi-literacy centers. In addition, multimodality is a form of multi-literacy that covers more ground than standard multi-literacy tools can cover. Writing centers must provide tutors with up-to-date technologies and tools to assist students with dis/abilities. Multimodality and increases in technology and technological accessibility go hand-in-hand, or at least should follow. Writing centers should already inherently be multimodal centers which include access to universally designed technologies foremost and retrofitted technologies secondarily. Without technological accommodations, equitable access is impossible for many dis/abled students (Yergeau et al.).

Yet, there are very few universities let alone community colleges, HBCUs, or high schools whose writing centers could be deemed as fully multimodal. Although Purdue Owl’s 2020-2021 WCRP survey responses showed 94.9% of participating writing centers “[Have] Online/Virtual Services” 50.4% of the responding institutions had zero “Asynchronous Text-Based Sessions”. In addition, 40.2% of responding institutions had zero “Synchronous Live Chat Sessions”, 16.2% had zero “Synchronous Live Audio/Video Sessions”, and out of 99 institutions surveyed only 25 had computer labs (2020-21 WCRP Results).

Possessing a truly multimodal center is worthwhile investment for all students. Creating tutoring spaces that at least attempt universal design benefits all students. Increasing multimodal availability for students with dis/abilities increases multimodal availability for all students. It is simply more efficient to design a tutoring space that is accessible to all students

rather than making a space that is retrofitted for students with dis/abilities. Still, designers and retrofitters of multimodal spaces must ensure that these space allow for flexibility, as all students, including those with dis/abilities, hold individualized needs. Through an ever on-going multimodal turn, writing centers can help to best ensure "that our final product serves the needs of those with disabilities as well as those without" (Williams).

As composition becomes more and more multimodal, there will be an increasing need for multimodal tutors. Multimodal writing centers and pedagogies are already readymade to implement multimodal tutor training. Tutors will need more thorough training in digital software to meet the demands of students seeking assistance on multimodal projects. Tutors themselves are a tool towards multimodality: having knowledgable tutors only grants a greater degree of equitable access to all students. A tutor can increase a student's understanding of multimodal tools, granting said student a new means of accessible composition. Technological knowledge can assist tutors and students to overcome both assistive and communicative gaps. However, Purdue Owl's 2020-2021 WCRP survey showed 13.7% of the responding institutions had zero "Hours of Training Provided for Virtual Consultations" (2020-21 WCRP Results). Writing centers with an array of multimodal technologies, alongside tutors with knowledge of those technologies, allow for more tutoring access for students with dis/abilities.

Increases in technological resources, through universal design principles and deeper tutor training, are needed to improve tutoring equitability. Multimodal writing centers hold a greater potential for accessibility for students with dis/abilities and as result should be prioritized for benefit of all students. Given the ever-changing landscape of composition, increases in multimodal availability can only be of service to all students.

References:

Hitt, Allison. "Access For All: The Role of Dis/Ability in Multiliteracy Centers." Praxis, 2012, www.praxisuwc.com/hitt-92. Praxis: A Writing Center Journal • Vol. 9, No. 2 (2012)

Williams, George H. "Part 3 | Chapter 12: Disability, Universal Design, and the Digital Humanities." Debates In Digital Humanities, edited by Matthew K Gold, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2012, pp. 202–211.

Yergeau, M. Remi, et al. "Multimodality in Motion: Disability and Kairotic Spaces." Kairos, Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy, 15 Aug. 2013, kairos.technorhetoric.net/18.1/coverwe/yergeau-et-al/pages/access.html.

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Disability multimodal writing centers

Location: Stillwater, OK, USA

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By Clint Gardner November 30, 2006

I have posted a poll in the IWCA forums: IWCA Forum: Peer Tutor => What do we call ourselves: the poll! It is a part of an earlier discussion that kind of petered out about the titles used for writing center workers. Please take a moment and vote! If you don't have an accc ...

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By C. Robbie Ptacek January 06, 2022

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By Anthony David Vernon April 23, 2024